

REMARKS

Claims 1-30, 32-33, and 35 are pending in this application. Claims 31 and 34 were previously canceled. Claims 1, 16, and 20 are in independent form. Claim 35 is new. Claims 2-15 depend from claim 1, claims 17-19 and 32-33 depend from claim 16, and claims 21-30 and 35 depend from claim 20. Claims 23-25 have been amended. No new matter has been entered.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his careful and thorough review of the claims and citation of relevant prior art.

In the office action, claims 1, 2, 5-18, 20, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,648,712 to Hahn. Hahn teaches a battery charger/casing 1 that includes channels 2 for receiving a carrier 13 that has electrical prongs 11 for mating with an electrical outlet. The carrier 13 is designed to seat flush with the surface of the casing 1, as shown best in Fig. 2. The carrier 13 seats on a surface of the device that is designed to rest against a wall when the carrier is plugged into a wall outlet, such that the casing 1 is positioned vertically on a wall, as shown in Fig. 11. In Fig. 23, an alternative embodiment shows that a universal power connector 405 can alternatively be seated in the channel 2, with the supply adapter providing a power cord and plug so that the casing 1 can be positioned spaced from a wall outlet. As shown in Fig. 23, the universal power connector seats in an opening in the side of the casing 1.

Claim 1 requires that the “the receptacle defined in the base wall” face “downwardly” and that the “first input assembly” includes an “adapter” that “forms part of the base wall with an outer surface that lies substantially parallel and in close or contacting proximity to the horizontal surface when installed.” In contrast, the receptacle of Hahn is formed in a side surface of the device, not in the base wall, and the power connector 405 of Hahn does not form part of the base wall. Claim 16 has similar elements as claim 1. In particular, in claim 16, the receptacle is called a “socket” and the “socket” defines “a recess that faces downwardly when the base wall is seated on a horizontal surface.” Claim 16 also states that “the adapter forms part of the base wall when installed therein such that an exterior surface of the adapter faces the horizontal surface when the charging unit is seated on a horizontal surface, said exterior surface of the adapter being smooth to allow the base wall and adapter to seat against the horizontal surface.” As stated above, in Hahn, the power connector 405 seats in an opening on the side of the casing and does not form part of the base wall. Claim 20 concerns a “body member” with “a rear face [that]

forms part of the wall of the charging unit, and has a substantially flat outer surface that allows the body member rear face to be positioned flush with the base wall of the charging unit.”

Hahn’s power connector 405 does not form part of the base wall. For these reasons, the pending claims are submitted to be allowable over Hahn, as well as the claims that depend therefrom.

Claims 3, 4, 19, 32, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Hahn and U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0115480 to Huang. Claims 3, 4, 19, 32, and 33 all deal with the addition of a USB connector. Since Huang does not teach the missing features, as discussed above in connection with claims 1, 16, and 20, the fact that Huang teaches the use of a USB connector does not remedy the deficiencies of Hahn. Thus, the claims are submitted to be allowable over the cited combination.

Claims 22-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Hahn and U.S. Patent No. 4,893,351 to McKee. Claims 22-25 concern a particular embodiment of the pending invention that includes a latching mechanism for the body member that has spring clips that mate with a post defined in the receptacle, as well as a plunger that assists in releasing the spring clips from the post when desired, and guide pins. McKee teaches cantilevered spring arms 86, 88 that are positioned around post 54. As the button 51 is pressed downwardly, a pin that is coupled to the top ends of the springs travels down a groove defined in the spring arms in order to spread the spring arms apart.

Claim 23 has been amended to point out a difference between Wei and the pending claim. In particular, claim 23 now requires that the corresponding recesses be non-cylindrical, as is clearly shown in Fig. 21 of the pending application. McKee teaches a cylindrical recess. Claim 24 has been amended to further define the plunger and its action to release the spring clips from the post. In particular, the plunger is tapered and is positioned transversely to the pair of spring clips. This is neither taught nor suggested by McKee. Claim 25 has been amended to point out that the guide pins are positioned inside the receptacle. The guide 66 identified by the Examiner in McKee is outside the receptacle. In addition, new claim 35 requires that the guide pins be electrically conductive, which is also not taught by McKee, but is supported by applicants specification at page 8, lines 23-25. Thus, claims 23-25 and 35 are submitted to be allowable over the cited combination for these reasons. With respect to claim 22, claim 22 is submitted to be allowable over Hahn and McKee because of the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 20. Thus, claims 22-25 and 35 are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

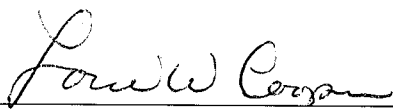
Claims 26-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Hahn and U.S. Patent No. 6,371,535 to Wei. Claims 26-30 concern a particular embodiment of the pending invention where the latching mechanism includes a pair of guide bars that are configured to engage the post positioned in the receptacle, along with a pair of detents that are configured to engage spring biased ball bearings positioned in the receptacle. Neither Hahn nor Wei teaches guide bars on the adapter that are configured to engage a post positioned in the receptacle. In addition, neither Hahn nor Wei teaches detents designed for use with spring biased ball bearings. The spring biased posts taught by Wei are different from the ball bearings taught by the present claims because with the present claims, because of the use of balls, the adapter can be pulled from the receptacle, if desired, without the need to unlatch the detents/balls. With Wei, because short posts are used, a mechanism is needed to unlatch the posts. Thus, Wei is very different from the detents taught by the present claims. For these reasons, claims 26-30 are neither taught nor suggested by the combination of Hahn and Wei.

Lastly, applicants do not concede that the Examiner has provided proper evidence supporting a conclusion that one skilled in the art would have a good reason to consult the cited references. Because the cited references fail to disclose all of the elements of the claims, however, one skilled in the art would not have been able to combine elements from the references to obtain the claimed subject matter, even if a good reason to consult those references had been shown.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the pending claims with a view toward allowance. No fees are believed to be due with the submission of this Amendment. The additional claim 35 was previously paid for with claim 34, which has been cancelled. Should any fees be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to deposit account No. 50-1432.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lorri W. Cooper Reg. No. 40,038
JONES DAY
901 Lakeside Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114
(216) 586-7097